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SUBJECT: ISG Report criticized by Speaker of Iraqi Kurdish  
Parliament Adnan Mufti in letter to Bush, Congress

11. (SBU) SUMMARY AND COMMENT: Adnan Mufti, Speaker of the Kurdistan National Assembly (KNA) of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in Erbil, Iraq, sent the Regional Reconstruction Team (RRT) identical copies of a letter to President Bush, Vice-President Cheney, House Speaker Dennis Hastert, and Senate Majority Leader William Frist criticizing the Iraq Study Group report. Proposed by an emergency session of the KNA December 17, the letter condemns what it considers the ISG's Baghdad focus and misunderstanding of Kurdish issues, and opposes certain recommendations of the report, including those on oil, Kirkuk, centralization, and neighboring countries.

12. (SBU) Although the KNA remains largely a rubber-stamp for legislation proposed by the KRG executive branch headed by KRG President Massoud Barzani, Mufti is a long-time PUK Politburo member and is from an influential family in Erbil. Official, educational, and civil society institutions in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region have organized many protests and publications against the ISG report; however, this is the first from the legislative branch of government. END SUMMARY AND COMMENT.

12. (SBU) Begin Text:

"21 December 2006

President of the United States of America, George W. Bush

Speaker of the House of Representatives, Congressman Dennis Hastert

President of the Senate, Richard Cheney

Majority Leader of the Senate, Senator Bill Frist

We wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

I would first like to extend our appreciation to the Government of the United States of America for liberating the people of the Kurdistan Region from the former tyrannical regime, and safeguarding us since 1991 under the Security Council Resolution No. 688.

It was encouraging for all the people of Iraq to see the role of American and Coalition Forces in rebuilding Iraq, making advances in the political process, conducting elections, and ratifying the permanent constitution for Iraq on the basis of federalism, democracy, and respect for human rights.

The complicated situation in Iraq and the increase of violence, especially in the middle of Iraq, has worried you as Americans, we the people of Iraq, and people throughout the world, and we all look for a solution for this crisis. This is how the Iraq Study Group was established, under James Baker and Lee Hamilton.

Our people expected that this would be an objective investigation to reach the truth, and based on that, to reach recommendations for the future of Iraq. With due respect for the members of the committee, the report contained a number of suggestions that caused severe

concern to the people of the Kurdistan Region. The Kurdistan National Assembly held a special session on 17th December 2006 in order to evaluate the report.

In an indirect manner, the report wanted to put suspicion on the leaders of the Kurdistan Region regarding their commitment to a federal region within a democratic Iraq. This was done, for example, by highlighting the fact that the Iraqi flag is not flown in the Kurdistan Region. The Iraqi constitution states that a new flag shall be established to represent all of Iraq, and is not reminiscent of the Baathist regime which inflicted severe atrocities upon our people.

I would like to bring to your attention a number of observations from the ISG report which we oppose:

-- Firstly, none of the committee members of the Iraq Study Group visited the Kurdistan Region in order to assess the situation on the ground and consider the viewpoint of our people. We believe that the report neglects our people's bitter history in the hands of the former Baathist regime, and sidelines our efforts in helping to create a federal, democratic Iraq.

-- Secondly, the ISG Report does not respect the sovereignty of Iraq and its constitutional government, which was an outcome of free and democratic elections monitored by the United Nations and United States of America.

-- Thirdly, it is suggested that all of Iraq's oil revenues should be centralized and shared on the basis of population. However, Article 112 of the Iraqi Constitution states that oil revenues should be distributed both on the size of the population and the degree of devastation inflicted by the former regime. Our position on this is to abide by the constitutional articles, rather than to

BAGHDAD 00004786 002 OF 002

the ISG report

-- Fourthly, the ISG Report suggests delaying the implantation of Article 140 of the Iraqi constitution, which handles the problems arising from the Arabization policy of the former regime. Thus the future and fate of Kirkuk, and other disputed areas, will remain without clarification. This not only contradicts with the Iraqi Constitution, but will also result in further complicating the matter.

-- Also, the suggestion of expanding the powers of the central government, at the expense of regional powers, is in itself a contradiction of the constitution, which calls for a federal system. The people of Kurdistan Region have voted for a federal system and the institutions in the Kurdistan Region have been established on this basis. Any retreat from this will be a violation of the just rights of our people.

-- Finally, the sovereignty of the new Iraqi state should not be jeopardized by inviting neighboring countries to meddle in our affairs. Nowhere in the report is there a reference to a federal and democratic Iraq, which we believe is an example for the Middle East and a sign of our victory in the war on terror.

We urge you not to consider the suggestions in the ISG report, as they not match the interest of the people of Kurdistan, and they are a violation of the permanent constitution of Iraq.

We would like to reiterate that the people of the Kurdistan Region are your strategic friends and allies, and we are looking forward to the continuation of your support. We share the same vision and objective, which is the establishment of democracy, human rights, justice, stability and the common interests of the people of the Region.

Sincerely,  
Adnan Mufti  
Speaker of the Kurdistan National Assembly

END TEXT

